

Exhibit A

Eric Tovar
319 Eugene Sasser,
San Antonio, TX 78260

August 21, 2023

Re: Joseph Martinez

To The Honorable Judge Robert J. Shelby, United States District Judge

My name is Gunnery Sergeant Eric Tovar, United States Marine Corps / Retired, and I had the pleasure of supervising Joseph Martinez from 2004 to late-2007 in various capacities to include a combat deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). I am writing this letter in response to Joseph's current circumstances. While I may not be familiar with the details regarding his allegations, I can provide my observation of his character and the honor, pride, and loyalty he has to this country.

I first met Private First Class/E-2 Joseph Martinez in 2004, approximately five months after he enlisted in the Marine Corps. We were both attending the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency's Basic Geographic Intelligence School. At the time, I was a Corporal/E-4 assigned as his immediate supervisor. Joseph immediately proved to be a leader amongst his peers by continually setting the example of a well-rounded Marine and always striving to be the best in all aspects to include his military appearance, physical fitness, and his drive to learn and excel in his assigned military occupational specialty (MOS). Joseph created a reputation as an honest professional dedicated to developing himself and the Marines around him. By the completion of the nine-month school, I along with other leaders noticed Joseph's desire to uphold the Marine Corps values and leadership traits Marine's pride ourselves on.

Next, we both received orders to the same unit aboard Camp Pendleton, California, however, assigned to different missions. In 2006, Joseph deployed with the unit to Fallujah, Iraq in support of OIF where he excelled with initiative and enthusiasm in all his tasks. Concurrently, and toward, the end of Joseph's deployment, I prepared for my deployment consisting of a two-man team supporting a naval deployment headed to Iraq. With limited personnel to deploy, leadership identified Joseph as my subordinate Marine on my two-man team. This required Joseph to redeploy from Iraq to the states to prepare for a back-to-back Iraq deployment with less than one month downtime. Joseph understood the mission and his loyal dedication to duty provided a professional and positive mindset prepared to re-enter the combat zone. While our ship was enroute to the middle east, Joseph demonstrated his selfless leadership by leading a Marine Corps Martial Arts Program instructing martial arts tactics to Marines to better themselves and prepare for combat operations. Initiatives like this combined with his extensive MOS knowledge, individual character, and leadership would advance Joseph through the ranks ahead of his peers. Joseph was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal for superior performance in a highly professional manner by creating and disseminating numerous intelligence products to facilitate military operations.

Over the course of my 20-year military career, and in my professional opinion, I can honestly say that Joseph is one of the finest Marines I have had the pleasure of serving with. I believe I have accurately represented Joseph as who I know him to be which is an outstanding Marine, a fine American, and a true patriot who loves this country. If you have any questions or concerns, or if I can be of further assistance, I can be reached at 949-306-3142.

Respectfully,



Eric Tovar Gunnery Sergeant (Retired) / United States Marine Corps